



Department of Justice

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District of North Dakota

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OFFICE OF TRIBAL JUSTICE ESTABLISHED

AS SEPARATE COMPONENT WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FARGO – Attorney General Eric Holder announced on November 17, 2010, the establishment of the Office of Tribal Justice as a separate component within the organizational structure of the Department of Justice. The action underscores the department’s commitment to tribal issues, and is required by the Tribal Law and Order Act of 2010, which was signed into law by the President on July 29, 2010. The statute was adopted with the support of the department and the administration.

“I am proud to say today we have formally established the Office of Tribal Justice (OTJ) as a component of the Justice Department,” said Attorney General Holder. “In the coming years, OTJ will play an important role in continuing the critical dialogue between the department and tribal governments on matters including public safety. The establishment of OTJ as a permanent component in the department has been a priority for me and this administration, and it is a critical step in our work to improve coordination and collaboration with tribal communities.”

In Bismarck, North Dakota United States Attorney Timothy Q. Purdon praised this action by the Department of Justice, stating, “OTJ continues to play a key role in the department’s ongoing initiative to improve public safety in Indian country. In September, North Dakota tribal

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communities received over \$5 million in grants to enhance law enforcement, bolster justice systems, prevent youth substance abuse, serve sexual assault and elder victims, and support other efforts to combat crime. These grants are the first under the Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation, a new effort combining ten different Department of Justice grant programs into a single solicitation and facilitated by personal at OTJ.”

The Office of Tribal Justice was originally established in 1995 as a unit within the Office of the Deputy Attorney General in response to tribal concerns. Since that time, the Office of Tribal Justice has served as the primary channel for tribes to communicate their concerns to the department, helped coordinate policy on Indian affairs both within the department and with other federal agencies, and sought to ensure that the department and its components work with tribes on a government-to-government basis. Over the course of the last 15 years, the Office of Tribal Justice has gained wide acceptance and support throughout the government and among Indian tribes. It is recognized by many as the expert within the federal government on a wide variety of legal issues affecting Indian country. The Office of Tribal Justice takes its place today as a stand-alone, permanent component within the department’s organizational structure, with internal managerial authority and an established reporting structure through the associate and deputy attorneys general.

The Office of Tribal Justice is staffed by a director, Tracy Toulou, two deputy directors and a special assistant, all of whom are serving on detail from other department components, and its operating expenses are borne by those components.

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